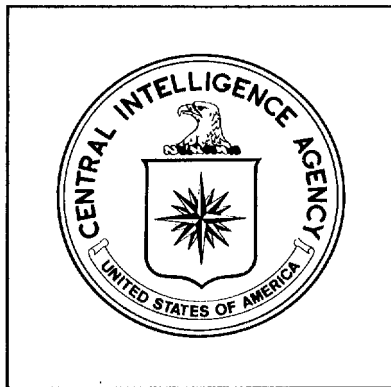


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Middle East-Africa-South Asia

STAFF NOTES

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MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Middle East - Africa Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

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~~SECRET~~Nigeria*Demobilization of Armed Forces
Under Consideration*

Recent public statements by army chief of staff Brigadier Danjuma suggest that the military government is giving serious consideration to a major reduction in the size of Nigeria's armed forces. There apparently are no plans, however, for proceeding immediately with a general reduction in force. Instead, by raising the politically delicate issue of demobilization, the regime appears to be trying to build its case for making a substantial cutback and to win acceptance for such a move later on.

Danjuma stated in a television interview last week that the government was "thinking" of reducing the 250,000-man armed forces--the largest in black Africa--by "about" 100,000 men. He took pains to assure that affected personnel would be provided with jobs or job training and that a "maximum effort" would be made to ensure that those discharged would not constitute a "social danger." Danjuma sought to justify the proposed demobilization on the grounds that the money paid in salaries--over 90 percent of the defense budget is for military pay--could be better used to finance the military's reequipment program and the country's economic development projects.

The former regime headed by General Gowon, under which the army was expanded from a pre-civil war total of about 10,000 men, was unwilling to face up after the war to the problem of reducing the army to a more manageable size. A demobilization of the magnitude suggested by Danjuma would undoubtedly be popular with Nigeria's civilian population but would, of course, also run the risk of generating potentially serious opposition in the military itself.

The present regime, well aware of the risk involved, will certainly proceed cautiously, if at all. Only last month, the government halted a purge

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of the officer corps soon after it began because of growing discontent among junior and middle grade officers and some members of the regime.

25X1C Nigeria's leaders may hope to minimize opposition and uncertainty by approaching the demobilization exercise in a carefully phased, well-publicized process. [REDACTED] the government plans to begin next May with the mustering out of all ex-servicemen who were recalled to duty during the civil war.

If a demobilization is eventually carried out on the scale Danjuma envisioned, it almost certainly would result in creating a large reservoir of unemployed, and disgruntled ex-servicemen. Other jobs probably could not be found for more than a small portion of those discharged. (SECRET NOFORN/NOCONTRACT)

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~~SECRET~~India*Indira's Son Moves Up*

Sanjay Gandhi, the right-of-center younger son of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was named last week to a top position in her Congress Party's youth wing. The youth group's designation of the 30-year-old Sanjay as a member of its executive council marks his first assumption of a formal political post, although he has been functioning for more than six months as one of the Prime Minister's closest advisers.

Many observers in India believe that Sanjay will soon move up to a higher post and that his mother is grooming him eventually to succeed her.

Sanjay emerged as a member of his mother's political inner circle last June at the time of her conviction--subsequently overturned by the Supreme Court--for election law violations in 1971. Since June he has influenced a number of important personnel and policy decisions, including a cabinet shuffle November 30 in which two of his political allies became ministers. Another supporter was installed last month as president of the party's youth wing.

These changes were accompanied by the ouster of officials belonging to the party's leftist faction; Sanjay has been a strong critic of leftist influence in the government. He has also advocated less government control of the economy, and his influence may have been a factor in the regime's shift to a somewhat more favorable attitude toward private enterprise in recent months.

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The pro-Soviet Communist Party, which has been in an uneasy alliance with the Prime Minister and the Congress Party since the late 1960s, has been unhappy over Sanjay's growing role. [REDACTED]

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There are limits, nonetheless, on Sanjay's influence and on his potential for advancement. He does not control his mother; she continues to make all the important decisions. Her continuing cooperation with the Communists and friendliness toward their Soviet mentors are examples of policies that appear to be at variance with Sanjay's anti-leftist orientation.

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If Sanjay ever does make it to the top, he would represent the third generation in the family to lead India. The Prime Minister's father, Jawaharlal Nehru, was the country's first prime minister. Before independence, Nehru and his father, Motilal Nehru, were major leaders in the long struggle for independence from Britain. (SECRET NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/ORCON)

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